

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00 SS-15 AGR-05 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4078

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: USTSJC, EAID, EINV, EAGR, TS
SUBJECT: U.S. - TUNISIAN JOINT COMMISSION - PRESENTATION OF
5TH PLAN

1. SUMMARY: MINISTER OF PLAN ZAAOUNI PRESENTED
ADVANCE COPY OF 5TH PLAN TO ME ON SEPTEMBER 2, REQUESTING
THAT WE STUDY IT AND ENGAGE MINISTRY IN DIALOGUE OVER
NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF POTENTIAL
ASSISTANCE FROM U.S. GOT CLEARLY COUNTING ON US FOR
HLEP IN ATTAINING AMBITIOUS GOALS OF THIS PLAN. MINISTER
HAD GATHERED HIS SENIOR STAFF PLUS REP MIN AG PLANNING
STAFF TO KICK-OFF SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH EMBASSY/USAID ON
VARIOUS SECTORS DEALT WITH IN PLAN. POTENTIAL PROJECTS
IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WERE IDENTIFIED. GOT APPEARS TO
HAVE CHANGED STRATEGY FROM LAST YEAR'S JC, AND IS GIVING
US WIDEST POSSIBLE LATITUDE TO FIND AREAS MOST
COMPATIBLE WITH OUR ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES. PROPOSED
SERIES OF MEETINGS AND CONCURRENT DIALOGUE SHOULD BE
USEFUL PREPARATION AND BACKGROUND FOR 1976 JC. ACTION RE-
QUESTED: WASH. AGENCIES INDICATE SUBJ. AREAS FOR FUTURE
MEETINGS WITH MINPLAN. END SUMMARY

2. AT REQUEST OF MIN PLAN ZAAOUNI, AMBASSADOR AND
EMBASSY/USAID OFFICERS MET WITH ZAAOUNI AND SENIOR
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STAFF ON SEPTEMBER 2. ZAAOUNI PRESENTED FINAL

DRAFT OF 5TH PLAN TO AMBASSAODR AND SUGGESTED THAT SERIES OF MEETINGS BE HELD BETWEEN MIN AND EMB PRIOR TO JC TO PROVIDE EMB AND USG FULL UNDERSTANDING OF PLAN AND TO EXPLORE ROLE U.S. CAN PLAY IN HELPING TUNISIA REACH GOALS OF THIS PLAN. HE ASSURED AMBASSADOR OF FULL COOPERATION OF MIN PLAN AND OTHER MINISTRIES IN PROVIDING DATA AND NECESSARY PROJECT STUDIES ADDING THAT GOT DOES NOT CONSIDER U.S. EMBASSY AS FOREIGN ENTITY IN TUNISIA(L'AMBASSADE AMERICAINE N'EST PAS UNE MAISON ETRANGERE). ZAAOUNI EXPLAINED THAT FINAL VERSION OF PLAN WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED UNTIL 1976 BASE LINE DATA AVAILABLE (EXPECTED MAY, 1977), AND REQUESTED THAT AMBASSADOR TREAT DRAFT AS INTERNAL DOCUMENT FOR EMBASSY USE ONLY. AMBASSADOR THANKED MIN FOR ADVANCE COPY OF PLAN AND STATED USG WISHES TO BE AT GOT SIDE IN REALIZING ITS AMBITIOUS GOALS.

3. IN PRESENTING PLAN, ZAAOUNI CITED AGRICULTURE/RURAL DEVELOPMENT AS SECTOR FOR WHICH GOT IS COUNTING ON US ASSISTANCE. ACCORDING ZAAOUNI, AORICULTURE IS KEY SECTOR IN NEXT FIVE YEARS WHEN TUNISIA HOPES TO ELIMINATE CURRENT TD10 MILLION (\$25 MILLION) BOP DEFICIT IN FOODSTUFFS ALONE BY SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASING PROEUCTION OF SUGAR BEETS, RED MEAT,AND CEREALS. MIN PROPOSED THAT REMAINDER OF MEETING BE DEVOTED TO CONCENTRATION IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR BEGINNING WITH PRESENTATION BY MUSTAPHA KHADI, CHIEF, PLANNING DIVISION, MIN AG.

4. KHADI BRIEFLY REVIEWED USAID CONTRIBUTIONS TO TUNISIAN AGRICULTURE CITING TWO MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS: (1) TRAINING OF SENIOR AGRICULTURE PLANNING STAFF (UMINNESOTA PROJECT), AND (2) ADAPTION OF AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY TO TUNISIAN CONDITIONS (CEREALS PROJECT). HE EXPRESSED GOT INTEREST IN RENEWAL OF AID PROJECTS IN THESE AREAS, CITING SPECIFICALLY (A) TRAINING OF STAFF FOR INAT (60 M.S., 12 PH.D. IN INDUSTRIAL CROPS, ECOLOGY, FISHERIES) AND FOR NEW ARID ZONE INSTITUTE IN MEDENINE, AND (B) EXPANSION OF CEREALS PROJECT TO BARLEY AND CORN. IN ADDITION FOR 5TH PLAN, THREE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AREAS ARE OF PRINCIPAL INTEREST VIS-A-VIS U.S. ASSISTANCE: LIVESTOCK, INDUSTRIAL CROPS (SUGAR BEETS), AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

5. LIVESTOCK: GOT HOPES TO REACH SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN MEAT AND EGGS, POSSIBLY MILK, BY 1981. ZAAOUNI INQUIRED ABOUT RECENT AID CATTLE PROJECT IN MOROCCO AS POSSIBILITY FOR FUTURE PROJECT IN TUNISIA AND AID REP UNDERTOOK

TO OBTAIN INFOR ON MOROCCAN PROJECT. GOT AMBASSADOR
TO U.S. HEDDA NOTED THAT LARGE SCALE RANCHING WOULD
BE NECESSARY TO REACH SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN MEAT, STATING
HE SEES GREAT POTENTION IN AID/AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL/
GOT COLLABORATION TO INTRODUCE NEW METHODS OF CATTLE
RAISING AND NEW BREEDS INTO TUNISIA, DRAWING ON
SUCCESSFUL CATTLE RANCHES IN SOUTHWEST U.S.

6. INDUSTRIAL CROPS: TUNISIA NOW IMPORTS 95 PERCENT
OF ITS SUGAR NEEDS. BY END OF 5TH PLAN, BGOT HOPES TO
REDUCE IMPORTS TO 70 PERCENT OF NEEDS INCREASING
PRODUCTION FROM 80,000 TONS TO 400,000 TONS, WITH
EQUAL INCREASE IN REFINING CAPACITY (EXTENSION OF PRESENT
REFINERY, CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND). EXPANSION OF SUGAR
BEET CULTIVATION TO BE ENTIRELY IN NORTH OF TUNISIA,
E.G., JENDOUBA PERIMETER, LOWER MEJERDA, GHARDIMAOU.

7. RURAL DEVELOPMENT: ZAAOUNI TOLD AMBASSDOAR GOT
WISHED TO MOVE AHEAD WITH ON-GOING SILIANA PROJECT,
DESPITE DISAPPOINTMENT OVER SLOW EVOLUTION OF PROJECT
PROPOSALS TO FINANCING STAGE. HE HOPED THAT JC COULD
SUCCESSFULLY BREAK SOME OF THE BOTTLENECKS AND SPEED
REALIZATION OF INITIAL ACTIVITIES. IN ADDITION SILIANA,
MIN PLAN CHEF DE CABINET BOUGATEF NOTED THAT NATIONAL-
SCALE PROJECTS IN RURAL ELECTRIFICATION (\$5 MILLION) AND
RURAL WATER DISTRIBUTION (\$12 MILLION) ARE FULLY STUDIED
AND ELABORATED AND NEED FINANCING TO BECOME REALITY.
HE REQUESTED AID STUDY THESE PROJECTS AS COMPLEMENTS
TO INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJEQT WHICH
RESTRICTED TO SILIANA.

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8. IRRIGATION: GOT IS MEARING COMPLETION OF ITS FOUR MASTER WATER-USE PLANS FOR NORTH, SOUTH, EXTREME NORTH, AND CENTER. MAJOR IRRIGATION PROJECTS FOR 5TH PLAN INCLUDE EXTENSION OF LOWER MEJERDA VALLEY PERIMETER (FROM 20,000 TO 33,000 HECTARES), INSTALLATION OF BOUR HEURTMA (JENDOUBA) PERIMETER (20,000 HECTARES) AND GHARDIAMOU PERIMETER (5,000 HECTARES) PLUS WORK ON SIDI SALEM DAM (EVENTUAL 40,000 HECTARE PERIMETER), SIDI SAAD DAM ON KAIROUAN PLAN, AND EXPLOITATION OF DEEP WATER INSOUTH (EVENTUAL 12,000 HECTARE PERIMETER). DCI DIRECTOR AMMAR STATED THAT FINANCING FOR MOST OF THESE PROJECTS AND ALREADY BEEN OBTAINED WITH MAJOR EXCEPTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH. CITING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES IN EXPLOITING WATER IN SOUTH, AMBASSADOR HEDDA SUGGESTED U.S. TECHNOLOGY AND ASSWSTANCE WOULD BE IDEALLY SUITED FOR THIS PROJECT. TOTAL PROJECT FOR SOUTH VALUED AT \$95 MILLION, OF WHICH \$30 MILLION PROGRAMMED FOR 5TH PLAN.

9. RECAP OF POTENTIAL PROJECT AREAS IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE:

A. TRAINING FOR INAT, ARID ZONES INSTITUTE STAFF.

B. LIVESTOCK.

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C. SUGAR AND SUGAR BEETS.

D. DEVELOPMENT OTLTOA.##

10. COMMENT: MIN PLAN HAS OBVIOUSLY DECIDED TO ADOPT DIFFERENT APPROACH FROM LAST YEAR AND LET US SELECT AREAS IN 5TH PLAN WITH WHICH WE WISH TO ASSIST. EQUALLY CLEARLY, GOT IS LOOKING FOR SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE FROM U.S. DURING 5TH PLAN, AND POSITIONING OF AGRICULTURE AS SECTOR TO BE COVERED FIRST IN PROPOSED SERIES OF MEETINGS INDICATES GOT PRIORITIES. SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS POSSIBLE ON ANY SECTOY OF INTEREST TO US, AND WE HAVE ALREADY INDICATED INTEREST IN INDUSTRIALSECTOR AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT. BELIEVE THESE MEETINGS WILL PROVIDE USEFUL DIALOGUE TO SHARPEN FOCUS FOR SUBSTANTWVE AND DEFINITIVE DISCUSSIONS AT JOINT COMMISSION. IMMINENT CONVENING OF JC WILL REQUIRE

CONCENTRATED EFFORT OUR PART TO BE IN POSITION TO GIVE
CONCRETE RESPONSES TO GOT PRIORITY NEEDS.

11. REQUEST WASHINGTON AGENCIES INDICATED SPECIFIC
SECTORS WHICH EMBASSY SHOULD REVIEW WITH MIN PLAN
PRIOR JC. REPORTING ON CONTENT OF 5TH PLAN IN
PREPARATION.
MULCAHY

NOTE BY OC/T: ##AS RECEIVED.

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